

September 21, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

Our Chamber represents 400 businesses in Eastern CT and I am writing you to urge you to make changes in the current system for the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities employment discrimination claim process.

This system has become a serious and costly problem for businesses of all sizes in that almost every case that is filed is won by the complainant. The statistics are proof that the process is broken. No other state has a 1% dismissal rate.

There is no burden of proof for the complainant. They say they are discriminated against without any facts or evidence and a long and costly process is initiated that ends ultimately, and statistically, with almost every complainant winning their case.

I have hear over and over again from business owners that complaints are made against them without any justification or evidence. The first step of the process is mediation where the employer, regardless of fault, is encouraged to give the complainant money to settle the case. It is encouraged not to right a wrong but to prevent any further work on the part of the Commission.

Even when the local investigators find no evidence of discrimination, the case is appealed to the State level where all but 1% of the cases are overturned. It is common knowledge that all one has to do is file a complaint and they will walk away with money regardless of the merits of the case.

This is not only an injustice but it creates a negative environment in this state for companies to do business. It is a shameful disgrace and an insult for a process that was supposed to protect people's rights and instead has turned into a way for people to extort money.

If success is judged by the amount of money that is generated for complainants rather than a set of metrics that measure just outcomes, this extortion will continue.

We urge you to look at the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's model as a more fair and efficient investigation and mediation process and to require Connecticut's CHRO to adopt this model, like most other states, as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Diane Nadeau  
President & CEO  
The Chamber of Commerce, Inc